



Jeff Sweeten

*Thus Saith the Lord*  
is presented by the

## **Park Heights Church of Christ**

1300 E. Boynton St.  
Hamilton  
254-386-3953

### **Schedule of Services**

#### **SUNDAY**

9:30 a.m. Bible Class  
10:25 a.m. Morning Worship  
1:30 p.m. Afternoon Worship

#### **WEDNESDAY**

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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# *Thus Saith the Lord*

## **LOOKING FORWARD TO JUDGMENT**

By Jeff Sweeten

Judgment conjures up a scary scenario. We picture a feeble creature, knees knocking and brow sweating, stuttering and stammering before the Great "I Am" trying to figure out how to answer for the sorry life he's lived. It is the ultimate embodiment of a final humility. Dante enhanced the fear with his fiery *Inferno*, and Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards added fuel to the flame with his soul-stirring sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," opening his lesson with "*Their foot shall slide in due time*" (Deuteronomy 32:35). Little wonder that modern theologians and pop-preachers would just as soon dispense with Hell altogether. It's so... *negative!*

As a Christian our viewpoint should be at the opposite end of this paranoia pole. It is not that the Christian denies the existence of Hell (Luke 12:5; James 3:6), and it certainly is not the case that Christians have such salvation-security as to make void the possibility of falling from grace into an eternal torment (1 Corinthians 10:12; Galatians 5:4). Further, Christians will teach others with Hell in mind, warning them not to reject the Gospel (John 12:48; Jude 1:23). However, the faithful disciple of Christ, the one who walks in the light (1 John 1:7), does not obsess about Hell, and there are several reasons why.

First, "*there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love*" (1 John 4:18). If we reject God's directives, we should fear and Hell becomes a real threat. However, one who truly loves God with more than lip service (1 John 3:18) will find no reason to continually look over his back, as if some pale-horsed rider were on his heels dealing a scything death. Such trepidation is un-Christian. Second, though the prospect of soul-separation is not expected to be a pleasure cruise, crossing the Jordan is a fact of life (Hebrews 9:27). Further, looking forward to the event with dread is poor reflection on Christian faith. Paul gives us that goal to which we should aspire, telling Timothy, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing*" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

As we grow older, the days seem to go by more swiftly, the memories become confused and often fade. Nevertheless, Jesus' words should never leave us. "*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*" (John 14:1-3). I'm looking forward to Judgment, so if I don't see you tomorrow, I hope to see you in Heaven.